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governor, whom the Abbé seeks to exalt in the pages of this book. But the recent completion of research has deprived the author's work of its value even from this point of view. The editors have done their best, by writing an elaborate introduction and some very pertinent notes, to bring the book into line with those founded upon a more complete examination of original documents. But the attempt is vain. The final facts now known have put the Abbé's point of view entirely out of focus, even in its own field; while they have brought upon the stage a whole world of action which he never saw at all.

We can only repeat that a more untoward book was never published; and while asking our readers to forget that it was ever written, we would ask them to remember that the Abbé Casgrain wrote it under conditions which absolutely forbade success; that he did far better work in other directions; that his best should be a source of pride and profit to every Canadian, French and English alike, and the man was even better than the best of all his books.

*Francis Hopkinson, the First American Poet-Composer, 1737-1791, and James Lyon, Patriot, Preacher, Psalmist, 1735-1794. Two Studies in Early American Music.* By O. G. SONNECK. (Washington: Printed for the Author by H. L. McQueen. 1905. Pp. ix, 213.)

It has hitherto been supposed that William Billings was the first American composer of music. In the present volume Mr. Sonneck, chief of the Division of Music of the Library of Congress, throws a flood of light upon the labors of two earlier native musicians, Francis Hopkinson, the poet and friend of Washington, and James Lyon, the patriot, preacher, and psalmist. The amount of musical detail that Mr. Sonneck has unearthed has astonished not only Americans but has found recognition in Germany. It is true that Billings was the first professional composer that our country possessed, but it is here abundantly proved that there were two amateurs in the field before him.

Billings published his first volume of compositions in 1770, while this volume shows that both Hopkinson and Lyon composed some works in 1759, when Billings was but thirteen years old. There is still a little uncertainty as to the exact date of Lyon's earliest composition and as to whether it preceded or succeeded the first musical work of Hopkinson. It is probable that the first American composition was a song, of no very great merit, entitled "My days have been so wondrous free", by Hopkinson, which our author conjectures to have been written in 1759. In 1788 Hopkinson published a set of songs which he dedicated to George Washington. In a letter (given on p. 113) dated November 20, 1788, Hopkinson writes to Washington, saying: "However small the Reputation may be that I shall derive from this Work, I cannot I believe, be refused the Credit of being the first Native of the United States who has produced a Musical Composition." To this

letter Washington wrote a quaintly humorous yet appreciative reply, which is also given in the volume (p. 114).

Francis Hopkinson was born in 1737 and died in 1791. He seems to have been active in many fields of music, giving concerts, writing criticisms of music, producing a commentary upon church-organ playing, creating poems for musical setting, and inventing new devices for tuning and quilling a harpsichord. He is one of the most interesting figures in early American music, and we owe his rehabilitation to Mr. Sonneck.

Reverend James Lyon (1735-1794) is not so interesting or so vivid a personality, yet he was a good patriot and a most earnest and sincere worker for both his country and its music. His first venture in music was the setting of an "Ode on Peace" for the commencement exercises at Princeton in 1759. Very soon after this (in 1761 or 1762) there appeared his collection of psalm-tunes, and as this contained "some Entirely New" (pp. 135-136) we may conjecture that our composer was fairly well launched by this time. Mr. Sonneck thoroughly disproves some of the sneering remarks which Frédéric L. Ritter directed against the volume, which bore the title *Urania*, and is perhaps justly severe against that writer's supercilious stand against much of the American music (*Music in America*, New York, 1890); but he might have acknowledged the thoroughness of Ritter's account of opera and orchestral music in New York, particularly as he takes pains to praise men much less worthy of praise.

There is some irrelevant matter introduced into the pages of Mr. Sonneck's volume, such as a *calendarium* (pp. 10-25) of musical events at Philadelphia from 1716 to 1759, and disquisitions upon Mr. Hopkinson's poetry, but these only add to the readable character of the work, which is a very important contribution to the history of American music and will undoubtedly have much influence on future works on this topic.

LOUIS C. ELSON.

*Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1773-1776, including the Records of the Committee of Correspondence.* Edited by JOHN PENDLETON KENNEDY. (Richmond: 1905. [For sale by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.] Pp. xxiii, 301.)

If a competent commission, such as that which the Queen of the Netherlands has established for her country, were to take up in systematic fashion the inquiry what are the chief gaps in our historical record, to be filled up by documentary publication, there can be no doubt that one of the leading desiderata which their survey would bring to notice is a good issue of the legislative journals of the eighteenth century. Without a full and exact knowledge of what they were doing, no satisfactory political or constitutional history of that period is possible. Yet in how few of the thirteen possible cases have we the records of the lower house in modern and purchasable volumes! Those of New York may be obtained, though with some difficulty. Lower-